



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR HOWARD COUNTY

For Immediate Release:

Contact: T. Wayne Kirwan, 410-313-2108

wkirwan@howardcountymd.gov

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Laurel Man Sentenced to 50 Years in Prison for Human Trafficking Teenage Girls

A Howard County judge has sentenced a Laurel man, convicted of the human trafficking of two teenage girls, to a 50-year prison sentence. Arthur Billy Coleman, 47, of the 1300 block of Larchdale Road was sentenced by Howard County Circuit Court Judge Mary M. Kramer on Friday. Last January, a jury found Coleman guilty of seven counts of human trafficking, attempting human trafficking and prostitution charges at the conclusion of a 3 ½ day trial.

When Coleman was arrested last July, the two girls, ages 13 and 16, were with him in his car and were runaway foster children under the supervision of the Baltimore City Department of Social Services. Neither girl testified against Coleman.

According to police and prosecutors, on July 22, 2016, Coleman drove the two girls to the Howard County Public Library on Cradlerock Way to meet a third girl who expressed an interest in making money. That third girl was an undercover Howard County police detective posing as a young girl in order to recover the teen runaways, one of whom was featured in numerous online prostitution ads, including the website Backpage.

At Friday's sentencing hearing, Assistant State's Attorney Colleen McGuinn told Judge Kramer that at the time of his arrest, Coleman was a registered sex offender who was wearing an electronic ankle bracelet to monitor his location by Prince George's County authorities for a 1999 third-degree sexual offense conviction. She stated that Coleman's "zeal for the sex trafficking world are illuminating," adding that "he sells human beings and children and profits from that trade."

At the conclusion of the sentencing hearing Judge Kramer sentenced Coleman to consecutive terms of 20-years each on the two counts of human trafficking of a minor, a 20-year-concurrent sentence on a prostitution-business charge and a 10-year consecutive sentence for the charge of prostitution under the age of 16.

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